

Health Briefs

INCONTINENCE: Surprise — hormones may trigger it

Women: If you have urinary incontinence or you're on hormone replacement therapy, talk to your family doctor or gynecologist. New research shows that HRT — long thought to help incontinence — actually increases the risk of developing the problem and

TWICE AS MANY WOMEN AS MEN HAVE THIS PROBLEM. makes existing conditions worse. A study tracked more than 23,000 women, ages 50 to 79, for a year after they began

HRT. The hormone link held true for "stress incontinence," triggered by coughing, sneezing and heavy lifting, as well as "urge incontinence," where you suddenly "gotta go" but can't get to the bathroom quickly enough. The results were reported in the Journal of the American Medical Association.

FLYING: On airlines, water safety is iffy

Dehydration is a common side effect of travel, but if you are tempted to drink from the lavatory sink or wet your whistle with coffee from the galley, beware. The Environmental Protection Agency recently issued a safety advisory after 15% of planes randomly tested last year had water with coliform bacteria, a



If your immunity is weak, the EPA says:

- Request a bottled or canned beverage.
- Ask whether the tea or coffee is made with bottled water. If it isn't, don't drink it.

sign of disease-causing organisms.

The good news? Most major U.S. airlines agree to use new water testing and disinfection procedures. For updates, check epa.gov/airlinewater.

— Susan T. Lennon